

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

AKANIYENE WILLIAM ETUK,

Plaintiff,

-against-

THE CITY OF NEW YORK,

Defendant.

1:24-CV-4989 (JHR)

ORDER OF SERVICE

JENNIFER H. REARDEN, United States District Judge:

Plaintiff Akaniyene William Etuk, of Brooklyn, New York, who is appearing *pro se*, brings this action against the City of New York. The Court construes Plaintiff’s amended complaint as asserting claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and under state law. Plaintiff’s amended complaint is the operative pleading for this action. (ECF 7.)

By Order dated July 2, 2024, the Court granted Plaintiff’s request to proceed *in forma pauperis* (“IFP”), that is, without prepayment of fees. For the reasons set forth below, the Court (1) directs the Clerk of Court to add as individual defendants “John Does 1-10”; (2) directs service on the City of New York; and (3) directs the Corporation Counsel of the City of New York to provide Plaintiff and the Court with the identities, shield numbers, and service addresses of the New York City Police Department (“NYPD”) officers involved with the events alleged in Plaintiff’s amended complaint.

DISCUSSION

A. Adding “John Does 1-10” as defendants

Pursuant to Rule 21 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (“Rule 21”), the Court, on its own motion, “may[,] at any time, on just terms, add or drop a party.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 21; *see Anwar v. Fairfield Greenwich, Ltd.*, 118 F. Supp. 3d 591, 618-19 (S.D.N.Y. 2015) (Rule 21

“afford[s] courts discretion to shape litigation in the interests of efficiency and justice.”). Under this rule, courts have added an individual as a defendant in an action, though that individual is not named as a defendant, because he or she is mentioned “throughout the body of the [c]omplaint” as involved in the underlying alleged events. *George v. Westchester Cnty. Dep’t of Corr.*, No. 20-CV-1723 (KMK), 2020 WL 1922691, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. Apr. 21, 2020); *see Adams v. NYC Dep’t of Corrs.*, No. 19-CV-5909 (VSB), 2019 WL 2544249, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. June 20, 2019).

Plaintiff refers to unidentified individual officers of the NYPD as being involved in the events alleged in his amended complaint. In light of Plaintiff’s *pro se* status and his allegations, the Court understands Plaintiff’s amended complaint to assert additional claims against those unidentified individuals. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule 21, the Court directs the Clerk of Court to add unidentified “John Does 1-10” as placeholder defendants in this action, under Rule 21. This amendment is without prejudice to any defenses those individuals may wish to assert once identified.

B. Service on the City of New York

Because Plaintiff has been granted permission to proceed IFP, he is entitled to rely on assistance from the Court and the United States Marshals Service (“USMS”) to effect service.¹ *Walker v. Schult*, 717 F.3d. 119, 123 n.6 (2d Cir. 2013); *see also* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (“The officers of the court shall issue and serve all process . . . in [IFP] cases.”); Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(c)(3) (the court must order the USMS to serve if the plaintiff is authorized to proceed IFP).

¹Although Rule 4(m) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure generally requires that a summons be served within 90 days of the date the complaint is filed, Plaintiff is proceeding IFP and could not have effected service until the Court reviewed the amended complaint and ordered that any summonses be issued. The Court therefore extends the time to serve until 90 days after the date that any summonses issue.

To allow Plaintiff to effect service on the City of New York, the Clerk of Court is instructed to fill out a USMS Process Receipt and Return form (“USM-285 form”) for that defendant. The Clerk of Court is further instructed to issue a summons for that defendant and to deliver to the USMS all the paperwork necessary for the USMS to effect service of a summons and the amended complaint (ECF 7) upon that defendant.

If a summons and the amended complaint are not served on the City of New York within 90 days of the date that a summons for that defendant has issued, Plaintiff should request an extension of time for service. *See Meilleur v. Strong*, 682 F.3d 56, 63 (2d Cir. 2012) (holding that it is the plaintiff’s responsibility to request such an extension).

Plaintiff must notify the Court in writing if his address changes, and the Court may dismiss the action if Plaintiff fails to do so.

C. The unidentified “John Doe” defendants

Under *Valentin v. Dinkins*, a *pro se* litigant is entitled to assistance from the Court in identifying defendants. 121 F.3d 72, 76 (2d Cir. 1997). In the amended complaint, Plaintiff supplies sufficient information to permit the NYPD to provide the identities, shield numbers, and service addresses of the unidentified “John Doe” defendants; those defendants include the individual officers of the NYPD who were involved with the events alleged in the amended complaint. It is therefore ordered that the Corporation Counsel of the City of New York, who is the attorney for and agent of the NYPD, ascertain the identities and shield numbers of those unidentified defendants, as well as their service addresses. The Corporation Counsel must provide this information to the Court and to Plaintiff within sixty days of the date of this Order.

Within thirty days of receiving that information, Plaintiff must file a second amended complaint naming those newly identified individuals as defendants and providing their service addresses. The second amended complaint will replace, not supplement, the original complaint

and amended complaint. A second amended complaint form that Plaintiff should complete is attached to this Order. Once Plaintiff has filed a second amended complaint, the Court will screen it and, if necessary, issue an order directing service on the newly identified defendants.

CONCLUSION

The Court directs the Clerk of Court to mail an information package to Plaintiff.

For the reasons discussed above, the Court (1) also directs the Clerk of Court to add as individual defendants “John Does 1-10”; (2) directs service on the City of New York; and (3) directs the Corporation Counsel of the City of New York to provide Plaintiff and the Court with the identities, shield numbers, and service addresses of the NYPD officers that were involved with the events alleged in Plaintiff’s amended complaint.

The Court further directs the Clerk of Court to (1) issue a summons for the City of New York; (2) complete a USM-285 form with the service address for that defendant, and; (3) deliver all documents necessary to effect service of a summons and the amended complaint (ECF 7) on that defendant to the USMS.

The Court additionally directs the Clerk of Court to mail a copy of this Order and a copy of the amended complaint (ECF 7) to the Corporation Counsel of the City of New York, at 100 Church Street, New York, New York 10007.

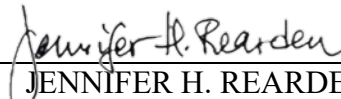
A second amended complaint form is attached to this Order.

The Court certifies, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3), that any appeal from this Order would not be taken in good faith and, therefore, IFP status is denied for the purpose of an appeal.

Cf. Coppedge v. United States, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962) (holding that an appellant demonstrates good faith when he seeks review of a nonfrivolous issue).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: August 26, 2024
New York, New York



JENNIFER H. REARDEN
United States District Judge

DEFENDANT AND SERVICE ADDRESS

The City of New York
Law Department
100 Church Street
New York, New York 10007

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Write the full name of each plaintiff.

-against-

____ CV ____
(Include case number if one has been
assigned)

**SECOND AMENDED
COMPLAINT**

Do you want a jury trial?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Write the full name of each defendant. If you need more
space, please write "see attached" in the space above and
attach an additional sheet of paper with the full list of
names. The names listed above must be identical to those
contained in Section II.

NOTICE

The public can access electronic court files. For privacy and security reasons, papers filed with the court should therefore *not* contain: an individual's full social security number or full birth date; the full name of a person known to be a minor; or a complete financial account number. A filing may include *only*: the last four digits of a social security number; the year of an individual's birth; a minor's initials; and the last four digits of a financial account number. See Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 5.2.

I. BASIS FOR JURISDICTION

Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction (limited power). Generally, only two types of cases can be heard in federal court: cases involving a federal question and cases involving diversity of citizenship of the parties. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1331, a case arising under the United States Constitution or federal laws or treaties is a federal question case. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1332, a case in which a citizen of one State sues a citizen of another State or nation, and the amount in controversy is more than \$75,000, is a diversity case. In a diversity case, no defendant may be a citizen of the same State as any plaintiff.

What is the basis for federal-court jurisdiction in your case?

- ☐ **Federal Question**
- ☐ **Diversity of Citizenship**

A. If you checked Federal Question

Which of your federal constitutional or federal statutory rights have been violated?

B. If you checked Diversity of Citizenship

1. Citizenship of the parties

Of what State is each party a citizen?

The plaintiff, _____, is a citizen of the State of
(Plaintiff's name)

(State in which the person resides and intends to remain.)

or, if not lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States, a citizen or subject of the foreign state of

_____.

If more than one plaintiff is named in the complaint, attach additional pages providing information for each additional plaintiff.

If the defendant is an individual:

The defendant, _____, is a citizen of the State of
(Defendant's name)

or, if not lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States, a citizen or
subject of the foreign state of

If the defendant is a corporation:

The defendant, _____, is incorporated under the laws of
the State of _____

and has its principal place of business in the State of _____

or is incorporated under the laws of (foreign state) _____

and has its principal place of business in _____.

If more than one defendant is named in the complaint, attach additional pages providing
information for each additional defendant.

II. PARTIES

A. Plaintiff Information

Provide the following information for each plaintiff named in the complaint. Attach additional
pages if needed.

First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name
Street Address		
County, City	State	Zip Code
Telephone Number	Email Address (if available)	

B. Defendant Information

To the best of your ability, provide addresses where each defendant may be served. If the correct information is not provided, it could delay or prevent service of the complaint on the defendant. Make sure that the defendants listed below are the same as those listed in the caption. Attach additional pages if needed.

Defendant 1:

First Name	Last Name	
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address (or other address where defendant may be served)		
County, City	State	Zip Code

Defendant 2:

First Name	Last Name	
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address (or other address where defendant may be served)		
County, City	State	Zip Code

Defendant 3:

First Name	Last Name	
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address (or other address where defendant may be served)		
County, City	State	Zip Code

Defendant 4:

First Name

Last Name

Current Job Title (or other identifying information)

Current Work Address (or other address where defendant may be served)

County, City

State

Zip Code

III. STATEMENT OF CLAIM

Place(s) of occurrence:

Date(s) of occurrence:

FACTS:

State here briefly the FACTS that support your case. Describe what happened, how you were harmed, and what each defendant personally did or failed to do that harmed you. Attach additional pages if needed.

[illegible]

INJURIES:

If you were injured as a result of these actions, describe your injuries and what medical treatment, if any, you required and received.

IV. RELIEF

State briefly what money damages or other relief you want the court to order.

V. PLAINTIFF'S CERTIFICATION AND WARNINGS

By signing below, I certify to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief that: (1) the complaint is not being presented for an improper purpose (such as to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation); (2) the claims are supported by existing law or by a nonfrivolous argument to change existing law; (3) the factual contentions have evidentiary support or, if specifically so identified, will likely have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery; and (4) the complaint otherwise complies with the requirements of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11.

I agree to notify the Clerk's Office in writing of any changes to my mailing address. I understand that my failure to keep a current address on file with the Clerk's Office may result in the dismissal of my case.

Each Plaintiff must sign and date the complaint. Attach additional pages if necessary. If seeking to proceed without prepayment of fees, each plaintiff must also submit an IFP application.

Dated		Plaintiff's Signature	
First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address			
County, City		State	Zip Code
Telephone Number		Email Address (if available)	

I have read the Pro Se (Nonprisoner) Consent to Receive Documents Electronically:

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you do consent to receive documents electronically, submit the completed form with your complaint. If you do not consent, please do not attach the form.



**United States District Court
Southern District of New York**

Pro Se (Nonprisoner) Consent to Receive Documents Electronically

Parties who are not represented by an attorney and are not currently incarcerated may choose to receive documents in their cases electronically (by e-mail) instead of by regular mail. Receiving documents by regular mail is still an option, but if you would rather receive them only electronically, you must do the following:

1. Sign up for a PACER login and password by contacting PACER¹ at www.pacer.uscourts.gov or 1-800-676-6856;
2. Complete and sign this form.

If you consent to receive documents electronically, you will receive a Notice of Electronic Filing by e-mail each time a document is filed in your case. After receiving the notice, you are permitted one “free look” at the document by clicking on the hyperlinked document number in the e-mail.² Once you click the hyperlink and access the document, you may not be able to access the document for free again. After 15 days, the hyperlink will no longer provide free access. Any time that the hyperlink is accessed after the first “free look” or the 15 days, you will be asked for a PACER login and may be charged to view the document. For this reason, *you should print or save the document during the “free look” to avoid future charges.*

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Under Rule 5 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Local Civil Rule 5.2, and the Court’s Electronic Case Filing Rules & Instructions, documents may be served by electronic means. If you register for electronic service:

1. You will no longer receive documents in the mail;
2. If you do not view and download your documents during your “free look” and within 15 days of when the court sends the e-mail notice, you will be charged for looking at the documents;
3. This service does *not* allow you to electronically file your documents;
4. It will be your duty to regularly review the docket sheet of the case.³

¹ Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) (www.pacer.uscourts.gov) is an electronic public access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information from federal appellate, district, and bankruptcy courts, and the PACER Case Locator over the internet.

² You must review the Court’s actual order, decree, or judgment and not rely on the description in the email notice alone. See ECF Rule 4.3

³ The docket sheet is the official record of all filings in a case. You can view the docket sheet, including images of electronically filed documents, using PACER or you can use one of the public access computers available in the Clerk’s Office at the Court.

CONSENT TO ELECTRONIC SERVICE

I hereby consent to receive electronic service of notices and documents in my case(s) listed below. I affirm that:

1. I have regular access to my e-mail account and to the internet and will check regularly for Notices of Electronic Filing;
2. I have established a PACER account;
3. I understand that electronic service is service under Rule 5 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Rule 5.2 of the Local Civil Rules, and that I will no longer receive paper copies of case filings, including motions, decisions, orders, and other documents;
4. I will promptly notify the Court if there is any change in my personal data, such as name, address, or e-mail address, or if I wish to cancel this consent to electronic service;
5. I understand that I must regularly review the docket sheet of my case so that I do not miss a filing; and
6. I understand that this consent applies only to the cases listed below and that if I file additional cases in which I would like to receive electronic service of notices of documents, I must file consent forms for those cases.

Civil case(s) filed in the Southern District of New York:

Note: This consent will apply to all cases that you have filed in this court, so please list all of your pending and terminated cases. For each case, include the case name and docket number (for example, John Doe v. New City, 10-CV-01234).

Name (Last, First, MI)

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Date

Signature

Return completed form to:

Pro Se Intake Unit (Room 200)
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007